

Dear Senator Needleman, Representative Arconti, and members of the Energy and Technology Committee,

I support every effort whose intent is to mitigate the effects of climate change. Climate change is the greatest challenge facing humanity and if we don't act the world will be one full of people fighting for survival and mass extinctions in the animal kingdom. I would like to see the desire for action on climate change that I share with so many aimed at the most effective course of action. When I look around the country at what is being done and seems to be working to achieve these goals of energy efficiency, deployment of renewable, sustainability and resilience of the electric grid, the mechanism that seems most effective is Community Choice Aggregation. CCA is when a community/ municipal agency becomes the default electrical procurer for its residents. CCA removes the profit motive for increasing electrical consumption and can make it its mission to reduce demand through energy efficiency efforts. It also has been very successful in reducing and stabilizing electrical generation prices. CCAs can develop their own local renewables instead of purchasing renewable energy credits which has been UI and Eversource's way of meeting the Region Greenhouse Gas Initiative renewable standards. When a CCA develops its own renewables, pricing is stabilized because renewables are not dependent on continually buying fossil fuels but instead are a one-time investment which supplies electricity for 20-30 years. It is actually purchasing the power rather than the renewable energy credit model of renting it. Renewable energy credit may reward green energy producer in another state but the actual electricity we use will still be made by burning fossil fuels here as long as REC are employed. CT's transmission lines are operating at capacity and therefore inefficiently. CT has a choice of either making huge investments in transmission capability or investing in reducing demand and developing local renewables thereby eliminating the need for addition transmission capacity. Energy efficiency efforts are the most effective method to save on energy costs and yet they are often marginalized and the first programs that are cut during budget struggles. MA and CA allow the CCAs to administer the energy efficiency funds of their customers. CCAs can address the shortcomings of the solar efforts which so far have only benefited a small minority of the market i.e. those with resources, site control and interest in participating. The majority, who are renters, have no credit, or don't pay their bills on time have been excluded from solar programs. So far the systems of tax credits, net metering, and state incentives have excluded the poor and unemployed from participation. CCA opens up the Shared Solar concept to a universal offering. Smart design that matches areas of large demand with distributed energy resources are an optimal CCA practice. CCAs administering energy efficiency programs can integrate them with the onsite renewables, forming a broad spectrum of power, heating and hot water systems to maximize efficiency. CCA presents an opportunity to reopen the retail energy market to efficient technologies using Solar Bonds. The development of local energy sources can create thousands of CT jobs. By working with its members CCAs can especially target reducing peak demand thereby flattening the power demand curve and reducing overall energy cost. UI and Eversource will insist that they need to make large expensive transmission upgrades because that is their business. I believe CCA is the best vehicle for addressing CT's energy needs and best option to ensure that the laudable goals set out in bill HB 5004 are achieved.

Sincerely,
Daniel Knudsen
Cheshire, CT

PAN34 environment monitor
New Haven energy task force member